

Dyslexia Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2016

9:00-3:00 CT

Southwest Conference Room

Attendees: Allison McAvoy, Alison Gauld, Becky Cox, Bill Wilson, Cathy Brooks, Briana Patrick, Eileen Miller, Elizabeth Norton, Erin Alexander, Susan Porter, Theresa Nicholls, Joann Runion, Julia McDonald, Melissa Miller-Benson, Mercedes Chartrand, Vicki Kirk

9:00 am Welcome/Introductions – Vicki Kirk

- Reading is a focal point of the Department of Education
- The Tier I section of the RTI²-Manual is being revised with the focus on access to grade level expectations through Scaffolding and Differentiation
- DOE is working on a screening process that would involve multiple data points from the initial research

09:30 am Overview of “Say Dyslexia” Bill – Bill Wilson

- The council is required to provide a report to the education committee of the senate and the education instruction and programs committee of the house of representatives about the number of students, information about specific accommodations, descriptions from LEAs providing dyslexia intervention and the TVAAS growth data
→ Use descriptive information (not just data)

10:00 am Dyslexia Overview – Theresa Nicholls & Vicki Kirk

Bill requirements:

- Districts
 - Implement dyslexia screening procedures (for at-risk students)
 - Convene school based problem solving team
 - Notify student’s parents and provide them with information and resources
 - Provide appropriate Tiered dyslexia-specific intervention through RTI²
 - Monitor student’s progress
- TDOE
 - Develop procedures for identifying characteristics of dyslexia
 - Provide appropriate professional developmental resources for educators in the areas of identification methods for students with dyslexia

- Council
 - Advise the TDO on matters relating to dyslexia
 - Meet at least quarterly
 - Submit annual report to the education committees
- Full annual report to the legislation will be in 2018, still working on some groundwork
- “What is Dyslexia” PowerPoint:
- Dyslexia is language based, not vision based
- Backwards writing and reversals of letters and words are common in the early stages of writing development among dyslexic and non-dyslexic children alike
- The actual prevalence of the disorder is nearly identical in boys and girls
- Brain scan studies show that dyslexics’ brains work differently from those of non-dyslexics
- “Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”-International Dyslexia Association
→ very technical description, council needs to work on making this statement more accessible and understandable
- Dyslexia is NOT a medical condition or a clinical diagnosis; Dyslexia is a learning profile used to describe phonological deficits that impact a student’s decoding and spelling abilities. Students with this learning profile struggle with accurate and fluent word recognition.
- Common Features:
 - Phonological Processing Deficits
 - Phonological Awareness
 - Rapid Automatic Naming
 - Phonological Memory
 - Reading Deficits
 - Decoding
 - Word Reading
 - Reading Fluency
 - Associated Deficits
 - Spelling
 - Written Language
 - Oral Language
 - Reading Comprehension

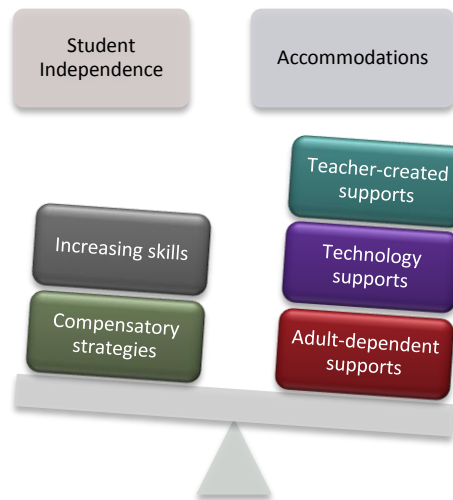
- Phonological Awareness is awareness of and access to sound structure within language
- Some common characteristics of dyslexia include:
 - Difficulty identifying or generating rhyming words (phonological awareness)
 - Difficulty with hearing and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
 - Difficulty learning the sounds of letters (phonics)
 - Difficulty remembering names and shapes of letters, or naming letters rapidly
 - Misreading or omitting common short words
 - Difficulty with word retrieval or naming problems
 - Difficulty sounding out words
 - Confuses letters that look similar to each other such as p/d/g/q and m/w/n
 - Many spelling mistakes
 - Excellent thinking skills
 - Sophisticated listening vocabulary
- Listen to parents about family history (dyslexia is hereditary) and concerns
- Discrepancies should be a huge red flag/indicator (spelling vs. spoken language, short term memory deficiencies)
- Characteristics are opportunities to see what interventions are needed
- Academic Impact
 - Dyslexia impacts other subject areas
- Evaluations conducted by licensed psychologists or neuropsychologists
 - Intellectual functioning
 - Achievement testing
 - Word reading
 - Reading comprehension
 - Decoding
 - Spelling
 - Written expression
 - Phonological processing
 - Auditory discrimination
 - Listening comprehension
- Characteristics can also be identified through informal assessments
 - Universal screenings measuring early literacy and/or oral reading
 - Diagnostic assessments measuring phonics, phonological awareness, spelling
 - Assessments used to align appropriate intervention
- What is the difference between dyslexia identification and identifying characteristics of dyslexia?
 - Is the assessment appropriate for the grade level?
 - Is it appropriate to screen every student vs. at-risk students?
 - Building teacher knowledge of characteristics of dyslexia and what screeners should be used and then what to do next

- Better communication with the parents
- Schools need to use multiple data points and teachers' applied knowledge of the students
- Build more qualitative data
- Identification for diagnosis or for assessing and aligning interventions?
- It is not necessary for a student to be identified with dyslexia in order to receive appropriate intervention.
 - Students should be provided with interventions aligned to needs identified through universal screening
 - Students with the characteristics of dyslexia have shown success with intervention that is:
 - Intensive
 - Explicit
 - Systematic
 - Structured
 - Multi-sensory
 - Language based
- What are the characteristics of a "dyslexia-specific intervention"?
 - Find the baseline of where the students are and how to move forward
 - Teach students how language works
 - Define multi-sensory piece and give examples
 - Empower the districts to make good decisions about programs they can chose from
 - Point districts to research organizations as a places of guidance (e.g. MTSU)
 - Empower parents and advocates to speak up about the needs of the individual child
 - Small group guided reading (whisper reading)
 - Reading-recovery
 - Interventionists that are trained on guided reading+
 - Student-based budgeting
- A continuum of services is available in Tennessee schools to address the needs of all students
 - Some students are successful with minimal supports and accommodations in the classroom;
 - some need additional intervention provided through general education;
 - and others need intensive intervention provided through special education.
- The criteria for identifying a student with a specific learning disability is established by state and federal law
- Access is the opportunity and ability for an individual to participate in the instruction, discussions, activities, products, and assessment that are provided to all students within a public school.

- Accommodations are provided to “level the playing field.”
- Students with dyslexia may be eligible for an accommodation plan through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)
- Additional Resources:
 - Center for Dyslexia | Middle Tennessee State University
(<http://www.mtsu.edu/dyslexia/>)
 - Decoding Dyslexia Tennessee (www.decodingdyslexiatn.wordpress.com)
 - International Dyslexia Association (IDA) (<https://ida.org>)
 - STEP, Inc. (Support and Training for Exceptional Parents)
(<http://www.tnstep.org>)
 - International Dyslexia Association- Tennessee Branch (<http://tnida.org/>)
 - University of Michigan (<http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/dyslexics>)
 - Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity (<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/>)
 - Office of Literacy:
Becky Cox, Executive Director of Reading, Becky.Cox@tn.gov
Liz Norton, Director of Coaching, Elizabeth.Norton@tn.gov
- How would you define dyslexia to someone who is not familiar with the term?
 - Relationship between reading and spelling
 - Language-based
 - Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity has some good information around dyslexia characteristics
- What are common concerns in the field on this topic?
 - Who do parents contact when they got concerns? How do they make sure there is no retaliation?
 - How are we going to make the bill universal throughout the state?
 - How do we educate teachers about the prevalence of children that have characteristics of dyslexia? (1 out of 5 children show characteristics)
 - How do we make parents feel heard and make them aware that we do care about dyslexia?
 - How to communicate with the parent if the child had characteristics of dyslexia?
 - What does a parent have to do to get into a right program, e.g. if only Tier II program is available?
 - Who is going to be the person that is appointed to do the training for the districts and teachers and what kind of qualifications will they have?
 - Are there are going to be additional assessment measures specific to dyslexia to the universal screeners? What is the timeline for follow-up assessment?
 - Is there going to be a survey asking districts and parents how they are enacting (reporting)?
 - Is there are going to be a timeline for parents/educators on what the council is working on? (Overall picture)

11:30 am Assessment and Accommodations – Alison Gauld

- “Accommodation Selection and Use” PowerPoint:
- Accommodations provide access to instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change the standard or expectations, just the route to mastery of the standard
- Access is: The opportunity and ability for an individual to participate in the instruction, discussions, activities, products, and assessment provided to all students within a public school.
- Accommodations should be used to assist the student in accurately demonstrating their knowledge and for participation, not as a tool to enhance, inflate, or disguise a student’s abilities.
- Accommodations should be based on
 - Student deficit or area of need
 - Student input
 - Area of content
 - Task, or level of independence required
 - Data regarding effectiveness
- Long-term Accommodation Plan:

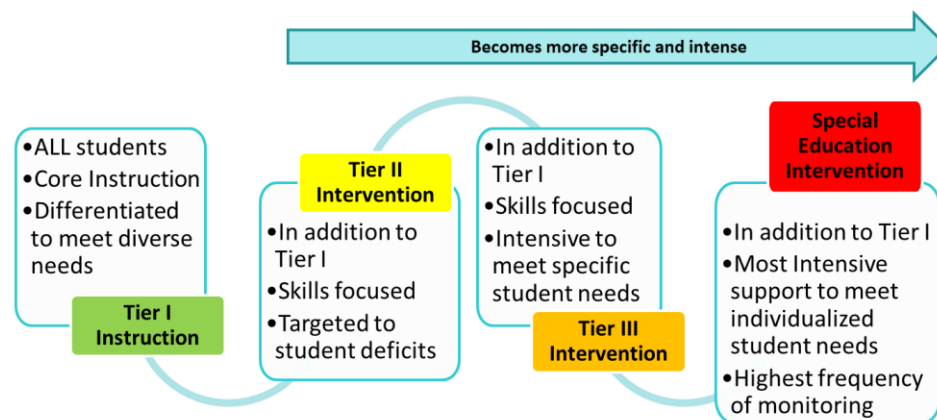


- Balance and Exit-Plan needed for accommodations
- Accommodations must be adjusted to each individual student
- Vision of Independence, not of accommodations

12:00 pm Lunch

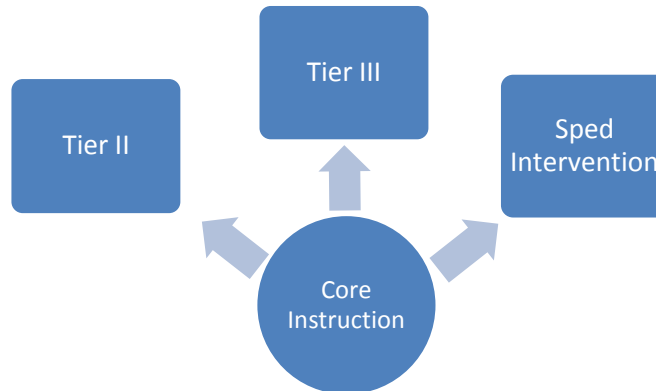
12:30 pm RTI² Overview – Joann Runion

- “Response to Instruction and Intervention – A Guide to RTI²” PowerPoint:
- What is RTI²?
 - High quality core instruction
 - Prevention and early intervention
 - Intensive Intervention
 - A means to close achievement gaps
 - A means to meet Annual Measurable Objectives
 - Grounded in thirty years of research
- What RTI² is Not?
 - It is not a replacement of core instruction
 - It is not just a special education initiative
 - It is not a new initiative that will go away
 - A Race to Identify students
- All Tennessee high school graduates provided two years of free education at a community college or Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT)
- Participants also receive individual guidance through statewide network of volunteer mentors
- Tennessee needs an additional 494,000 to reach 55 percent by 2025, particularly from programs at TCATs and two-year schools.
- Tennessee is the first state to have a public K-14 education system
- By 2017, the RTI² Framework will help reduce the number of students scoring below basic on the NAEP
- Guiding Principles: RTI²
 - Leadership
 - A culture of collaboration
 - Prevention and early intervention
- Continuum of Instructional Support:

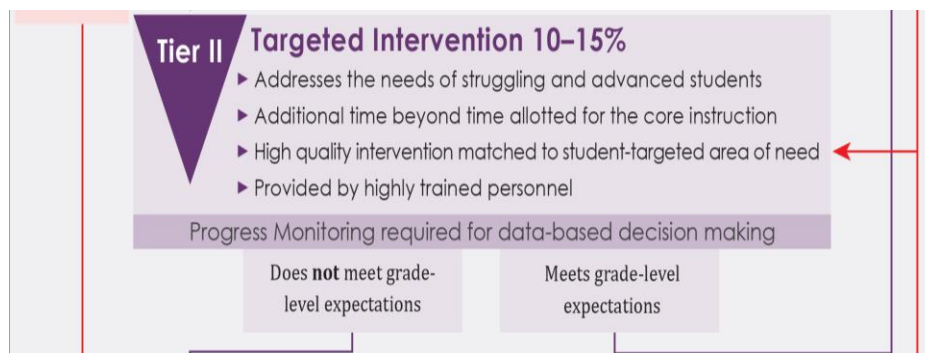


- Tier I Core Instruction:
 - Classroom instruction for all - Tennessee State Standards
 - Research shows 80-85% of students will respond to Tier I
 - Recommended Instructional Time
 - Ongoing Assessments (grade level checks, benchmarks)
 - Fidelity Monitoring (Team, Student Data, etc.)
 - Universal Screener (K-8, recommended 9-12)(students below 25% go to Tier II)
 - Differentiation and Scaffolding
 - Students who have a skill deficit have that deficit all day
 - It is imperative that Tier I teachers understand a student's area of deficit and differentiate and scaffold core instruction for each student accordingly
 - Reteaching vs. Intervention
 - Reteaching is thinking about how we can restructure /or reteach a lesson
 - Intervention focuses on skills
 - Standard based universal screeners
 - Intervene on a standard
 - Tells you what to reteach/remediate (Tier 1)
 - Adaptive. Task changes based on student performance
 - Does not consistently measure the same skill over and over to determine if intervention is working
 - Skills based universal screeners
 - Intervene on skill deficit/need
 - Warning system for your most at-risk students and identifies discrete skill deficit(s)
 - Not adaptive. Task does not change based on student performance
 - Consistently measures same skill
 - Independent of grade level standard
 - Areas of Deficit for Intervention
 - Basic reading skills (letters, letter sounds, phonological awareness, phonics)
 - Reading comprehension
 - Reading fluency
 - Written expression
 - Math calculation (column addition, basic facts, complex computation, decimals, fractions, conversions, percentages, etc.)
 - Math reasoning/problem solving (number and operations, base ten, place value, measurement and length, fractions, geometry, algebra, expressions, linear equations etc.)
- Some districts might have another layer to their assessment (testing for deficits in other areas)

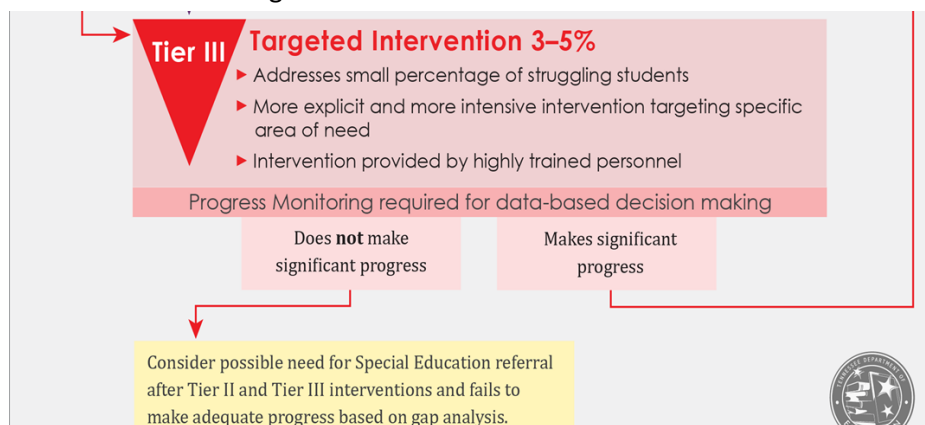
- Written expression assessments are being used by some districts monitoring specific areas that might have a deficiency
- RTI²-Manual that is posted online is being updated right now (Core Instructions)
- Tier II, Tier III, or Sped. Intervention: Core Instruction plus a skill specific intervention



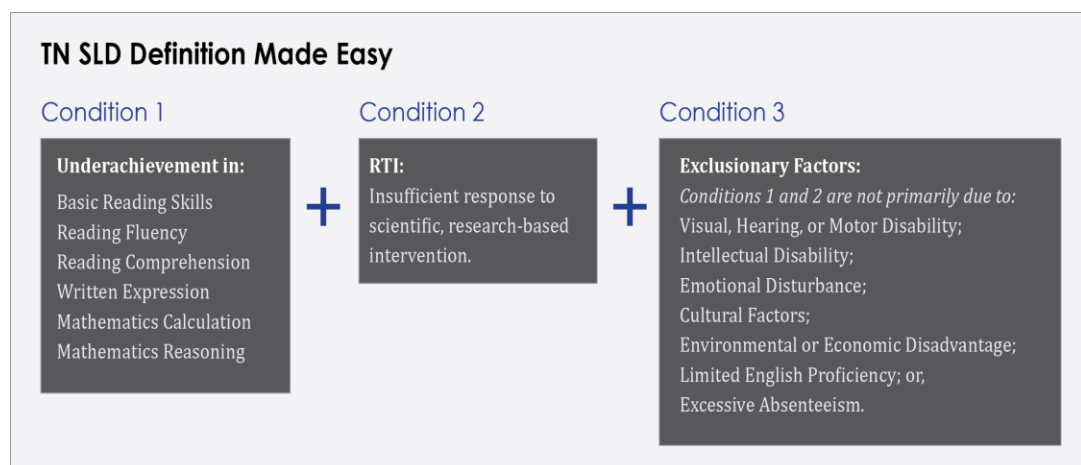
- Students don't need to go through each Tier to receive the level of support that's appropriate for them
- Intervention Review Process was conducted in 2015
 - Interventions were reviewed 8 times (one at every region) and a final list of interventions and what the pieces were that they supported was compiled.
- Tier II: Targeted Intervention



- Tier III: Targeted Intervention



- Students may immediately require Tier III intensive intervention.
 - If students are below the 10th percentile or 1.5 to 2.0 grade levels behind.
 - Your data team should make these decisions on an individual basis.
 - Students who are immediately placed in Tier III level intervention must receive the minimum number of recommended minutes of intervention.
 - The purpose of immediately placing a student in Tier III intervention is to increase the intensity of the intervention, not to shorten the duration of the intervention period.
 - Best interventionist should be at Tier III so they can provide all the pieces to close the gaps
 - High schools usually utilize the “early warning system” to screen students
 - Progress Monitoring: To support a student’s skill growth
 - Fidelity Checks: To support a teacher’s implementation
 - Initial Evaluations
- } Complete picture of student progress
- If data indicates a student’s progress is not sufficient, then the team may obtain *Notice and Consent for Initial Evaluation*.
 - The team must complete all evaluations and establish the student’s eligibility for service within the initial evaluation timeline.
 - The student will remain in intervention and will continue to be progress monitored while the requested evaluations are being completed.
 - All information collected including the student’s responsiveness to intervention will be a part of the student’s eligibility determination.



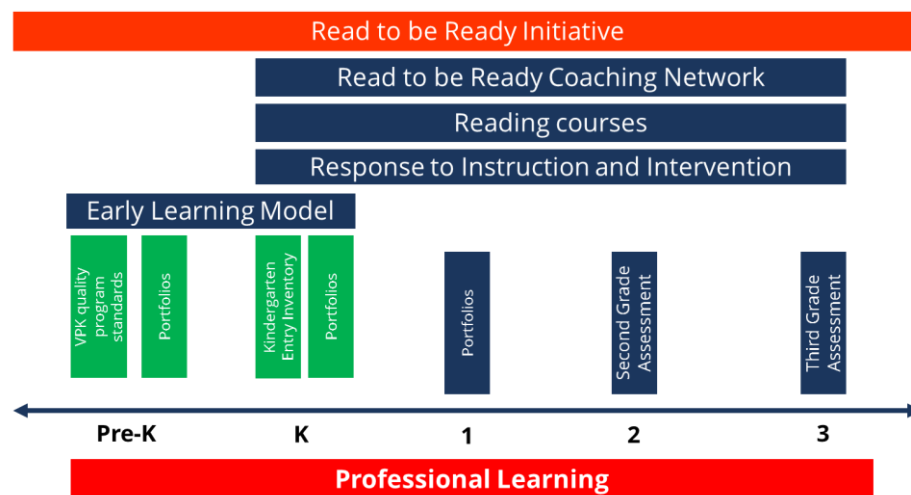
- Questions:
 - Who can parents call for support if they feel like their school is not doing an adequate job (e.g. art teacher is teaching reading for Tier III)?
 - Parents have the right to request an evaluation of the school system at any time.
- Resources and Information:
 - www.TNCore.org
 - www.tnspdg.com

- Contact Information: Instructional Programming Team
 - **Ryan Mathis**, Director of Outreach, Partnerships, and Support
Ryan.Mathis@tn.gov
 - **Theresa Nicholls**, Director of School Psychology Services
Theresea.Nicholls@tn.gov

1:15 pm




Ready to be Ready Overview – Becky Cox

- Setting the foundation recommendations
 - Support deeper literacy instruction to ensure that students learn decoding within the context of broader comprehension
 - Increase schools' and teachers' ability to differentiate instruction in the early grades and to target students' academic and non-academic needs as early as possible
 - Improve RTI² implementation for students who need greater support in specific skill areas
 - Get better at getting better
- Goal: 75% of students or more being proficient by 2025



- Ready to be Ready
 - Chapter 1: Early literacy matters
 - Chapter 2: But it's never too late
 - Chapter 3: Reading is more than just "sounding out"
- Reading is thinking
 - statement might need to be revised, might be taken as not reading is not thinking, there are different forms of reading e.g. braille and supported reading, etc.
 - Chapter 4: Teacher knowledge and practice are critical
Teacher knowledge and practice are critical; Educators must have a deep understanding of the art and science of literacy instruction in order to develop lifelong readers.

- Chapter 5: It takes a community
- Our Theory of Action

Literacy Coaches	Classroom Teachers	Instructional Strategies	Students
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build content knowledge in early literacy • Develop coaching skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build content knowledge in early literacy • Provide sound models of effective instructional practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained implementation of research-based, high impact instructional strategies • On-going study and coaching support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student learning and literacy achievement

→ Building content knowledge of all stakeholders is important

→ Dyslexia and different interventions should get mentioned

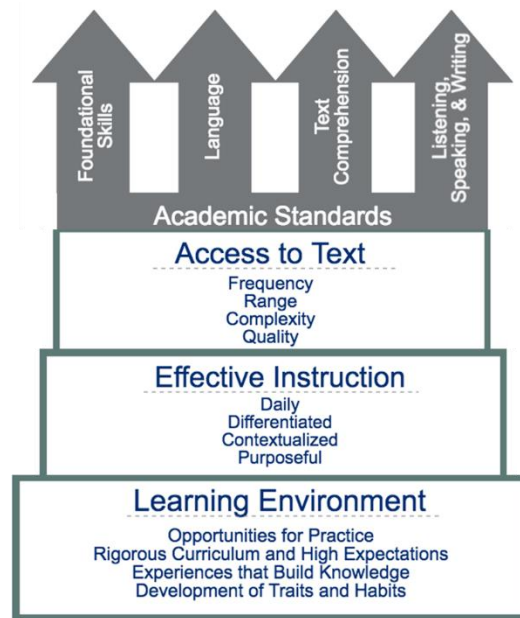
- Vision of Proficient Reading

				
Accurately, fluently, and independently read a wide range of complex texts	Strategically employ comprehension strategies to analyze key ideas and information	Construct interpretations and arguments through speaking and writing	Develop vocabulary	Build knowledge about the world

- Skill Competencies
 - Ability to hear and work with spoken words
 - Concepts of print
 - Alphabet knowledge
 - Word Reading
 - Spelling
 - Fluency
 - Knowledge Competencies
 - Oral language skills
 - Vocabulary
 - Concepts about the world
 - Ability to understand and express complex ideas
- } Balance

→ Some kids may always have shortcoming in some fields. We have to accept that and realize that they still can be successful students. Help kids/teachers understand that we all struggle with different things and to give them some allowances for that.

- Making meaning from text

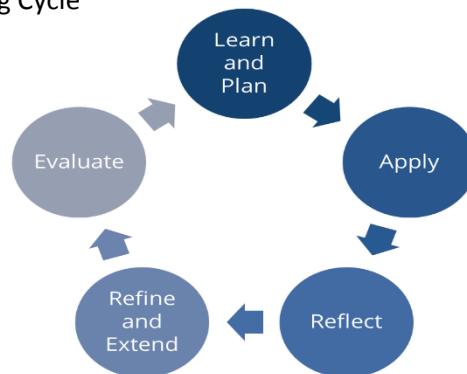


- Instructional Outcomes

- 3 year initiative with one instructional outcome each semester

Year 1	Semester 1	Accessing Complex Texts through Interactive Read Alouds
	Semester 2	Accessing On-grade Level Texts through Shared Reading
Year 2	Semester 1	Responding to Texts through Interactive Speaking and Writing Activities
	Semester 2	Teaching Foundational Skills through Reading and Writing
Year 3	Semester 1	Guided Reading and Instructional-level Texts
	Semester 2	Independent Reading and Reading Conferences

- The Coaching Cycle



- The timeframe for reflecting depends on the level of knowledge of the teacher and the coach being able to provide that support (based on the level of expertise)
- The goal is to provide access for all students

- Ready to Be Ready Model: Strong literacy core with instructional coaching through a collaborate network of people working together all focused in the same direction
- Trying to catch the student's need as early as possible
- Strengthen Tier I, supporting the core for all students
- Be really explicit about what phonological awareness is

2:15 pm**Next Steps – Vicki Kirk**

- DOE team will compile ideas and will present it to the council
- Communications
- Definitions
- Interventions
- Professional development
- LEA/Department expectations
 - Guidance documents
 - Information sharing
 - Training
- Guidance for parents on how to get the RTI² and RTI-B as quickly as possible and what it looks like
- Inform parents about trainings for the teachers (who is doing the training and who is funding it?)
- What other areas/modules need more focused training?
 - Short clips of samples (three examples) of dyslexia for teachers
 - Video or hands-on activity for teachers to show characteristics of dyslexia and checklists
 - Examples for middle school and high school how characteristics of dyslexia manifest in different content areas
 - Simulation of what dyslexia is for teachers (empathy/emotional piece)
 - Examples of how to go from data to intervention
 - Can we do training through the core office on RTI²? (distinguish it from special education)
 - Clarify how spelling should be taught (tier I); spelling patterns and decoding of characteristics of dyslexia
 - More information about intentional accommodation selection and how to select them
 - Information on what type of technology is out there, e.g. Bookshare, Easy Spelling Aid, SnapeType, Co:Writer and let teachers know that it is an accommodation
 - Developing communications and toolkits for districts
 - Accountability and cohesiveness of districts